

For Immediate Release

Contact: Alexis Moore
Office: [215-241-7060](tel:215-241-7060)

Cell: [215-514-5682](tel:215-514-5682)
amoore@afsc.org

Obama, Senate panel's immigration reform outlines helpful

Quaker group: Fair path to citizenship mustn't rely on more inefficient border controls

PHILADELPHIA (January 30, 2013) – The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) a Quaker peace and social justice organization, finds it helpful that both the President and eight U.S. Senators have agreed the time is now for creating a path to citizenship. But it should not be paired with more unnecessary, ineffective border control measures, or expansion of employment verification programs such as E-Verify and I-9 audits which put labor protections of all workers at risk.

A fair path for permanent status can't be created without input from the people most affected – undocumented people themselves who've seen this issue ignored for years.

Those communities have been calling for the end of the current cruel, costly and inefficient system of detention and deportation. It makes no sense to continue this bad policy when all agreed that the underlying law is broken.

Further, both proposals would create an almost 30 year wait time for people who are applying under a proposed provisional residence. The current line may be already up to 20 years in some cases, and that backlog must be addressed at the same time that new applications are submitted for the proposed legalization program. In other cases, there's just no line to wait on.

"The Senate and President's proposals are getting the important debate on immigration policy reform moving. However, we need to go back to why the debate is going on, which is about the reality our communities are living. So far, what is on the table misses the point," says Aura Kanegis, AFSC's director of public policy and advocacy.

While bills have yet to be submitted, and there is a long path ahead, AFSC urges lawmakers to keep due process and respect for human rights for all at the top of their minds as they finally create just, fair and humane immigration reform.

Based on decades of work with and for immigrants across the country, AFSC has created [A New Path](#), our seven principles for a new path toward a humane immigration policy. For more on AFSC's programs for peace, visit www.afsc.org or follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

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The American Friends Service Committee is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.